

Abstract:

This study explored barriers to consistent condom use among heterosexual HIV-1 serodiscordant couples who were aware of the HIV-1 serodiscordant status and had been informed about condom use as a risk reduction strategy. We conducted 28 in-depth interviews and 9 focus group discussions among purposively selected heterosexual HIV-1 serodiscordant couples from Thika and Nairobi districts in Kenya. We analyzed the transcribed data with a grounded theory approach. The most common barriers to consistent condom use included male partners' reluctance to use condoms regardless of HIV-1 status coupled with female partners' inability to negotiate condom use, misconceptions about HIV-1 serodiscordance, and desire for children. Specific areas of focus should include development of skills for women to effectively negotiate condom use, ongoing information on HIV-1 serodiscordance and education on safer conception practices that minimize risk of HIV-1 transmission.